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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7347
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 000706

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/S - NAMDE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/13/2014

TAGS: PREL ZA

SUBJECT: PANDE CALLS OFF THE DOGS

REF: A. LUSAKA 694

¶B. LUSAKA 698

Classified By: CDA Michael Koplovsky for reason(s) 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) There have been no further public accusations, threats or nefarious assertions against diplomats resident in Lusaka since Charge's October 7 meeting with Foreign Minister Pande (ref A). Zambian Government (GRZ) officials have reverted to their status quo ante antics -- excoriating independent media and brow-beating civil society. EU Chiefs of Mission have yet to secure an audience with Pande, which would in any case have been a tortuous discussion of Cotonou Article 8 democracy and governance criteria rather than a frank demarche on diplomatic practices and etiquette. In discussions with emboffs, donors remained steadfast in their "red-line" position that the GRZ must 1) register the UK civil case against former President Chiluba; 2) appeal the Chiluba acquittal; 3) not/not restore Chiluba's presidential immunity; and 4) stop assaults on press freedom.

¶2. (C) As for the fallout from the ref B note verbale strictly interpreting Vienna Article 41, Embassy Lusaka has been keeping its GRZ appointments, conducting business as usual, but continues to seek clarification from all our GRZ interlocutors on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) demand for communication solely through Foreign Affairs channels. There have been no reports of enforcement of the note verbale, nor of repercussions for ignoring it. Donors are quite concerned that their development programs and technical assistance will grind to a halt if the GRZ enforces the note verbale to the letter. We are more concerned that a double standard will be applied: We will be free to continue development assistance unhindered, but less congenial discussions with our Zambian counterparts will require coordination through the Foreign Ministry.

KOPLOVSKY